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AUTHORITY

**OAG, D/A ltr, 29 Apr 1980**

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**AD873660**

HEADQUARTERS  
5TH HOWITZER BATTALION, 27TH ARTILLERY  
APO San Francisco 96347

**INDEXED**

AVADF-A

15 May 1966

SUBJECT: Letter of Transmittal

TO: Commanding General  
1st Bde, 101st Abn Div  
APO US Forces 96347

Transmitted herewith are three copies of the Operational Report on Lessons Learned for the period of 1 January 1966 to 30 April 1966 as required by HQS I Field Force Vietnam Regulation 525-1 dated 19 April 1966.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

*Gerald A. Kappeler*  
GERALD A. KAPPELER  
Capt, Arty  
Adjutant

AVAD-C (15 May 1966) 1st Ind

HQ, 1st BRIGADE, 101ST AIRBORNE DIVISION, APO US FORCES 96347 25 May 1966

TO: Commanding General, I FFORCEV, APO US FORCES 96240

FOR THE COMMANDER:

2 Incls  
1 w/d

*TOMMY G. RICHARDSON*  
TOMMY G. RICHARDSON  
Capt, AGC  
Asst AG

UNCLASSIFIED REPORT  
DISTRIBUTION NO FOREIGN WITHOUT APPROVAL OF  
ASSISTANT CHIEF OF STAFF FOR FORCE DEVELOPMENT  
(ARMY) ATTN: FOR OT UT, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

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HEADQUARTERS  
5TH HOWITZER BATTALION 27TH ARTILLERY  
APO San Francisco 96347

AVADFC

SUBJECT: Operational Report on Lessons Learned (RCS CSGPO-23 (R1))

TO: See Distribution

SECTION I  
SIGNIFICANT ORGANIZATION OR UNIT ACTIVITIES

1. Personnel:

a. During the month of January the battalion lost through expiration of term of service two (2) officers and ninety-one (91) enlisted men. At the end of January enlisted replacements were not present to fill all the vacancies created by these losses. The assigned strength of the battalion dropped to four hundred and sixty-one (461) enlisted personnel. Officer replacements however did arrive for the two officers that rotated. In the month of February the projection of our losses to the middle of the month without replacements would have given the battalion an assigned strength of three hundred and seventy-nine (379) enlisted men. By the sixth of February when our assigned strength went down to 449 enlisted personnel the replacement situation began to get crucial. It was determined that the replacements we had on orders were being diverted to other units upon arrival in country. Command letters were sent out through channels which brought the problem to the attention of the replacement station. The problem was immediately alleviated and by 16 February the assigned strength of the battalion was two (2) over the authorized strength of four hundred and eighty-six enlisted personnel. From that time on the replacement system has continued to operate efficiently. One hundred fifty-five replacements were received from the fifteenth of February to the end of April.

b. In the area of personnel services few problems have been encountered. Religious services have generally been conducted weekly except when the medical situation prevented the presence of the chaplains. Mail service has ranged from fair to excellent depending upon the transportation available. The non availability of a Post Exchange has had a slight effect on the morale of the troops; however, the necessities such as soap, cigarettes, shaving cream, razor blades, etc., have been available through sundry packets. In the special services field, magazines and pocket books have been made available to the men. Movies have been available only in limited quantities through the Brigade Special Services Office. Stars and Stripes are only available in a weekly, and are usually several days late.

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Possibly the greatest morale problem has been that beer and soft drinks are available in very limited quantities. Refrigeration is not available to cool these drinks. The only coolant available is ice that must be purchased off the local economy and many times this is in exceedingly short supply. Taking all items into consideration the morale of the unit has continued to be excellent.

c. In the area of Civic Action this unit has had several projects during the reporting period. These projects have had a great influence in gaining the support and confidence of the local Vietnamese. In February the Battalion Surgeon started holding sick call and conducting classes in health and sanitation in the Refugee Camp of Den Tac near Tuy Hoa, Republic of Vietnam. To this date he has treated over five hundred (500) Vietnamese for a multitude of ailments. While conducting sick call he also instructed several of the young women in the village so they could assist him in a nurses capacity. Also, through this training they are better able to assist their own people. Besides the medical assistance given the Vietnamese people, this battalion has been assisting in the teaching of English in the Tuy Hoa High School. One officer spends two morning hours at the high school Monday through Friday. Classes are held only for those students who have chosen English as their primary foreign language.

2. Intelligence:

a. Throughout Operations JEFFERSON, VAN HUREN, HARRISON and FILMORE, this unit coordinated and received intelligence information from the below listed courses:

- (1) 47th Infantry Regiment (ARVN)
- (2) 2d Korean Marine Brigade
- (3) 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division
- (4) Sector Operations and Intelligence Center, Tuy Hoa.

b. The intelligence received was used to prepare an extensive harassing and interdiction fire program on Viet Cong avenues of approach, routes of withdrawal, known and suspected enemy locations. Intelligence was utilized extensively in all artillery fire planning, convoy movements and airmobile operations. Helicopter pilots were briefed as to avoid enemy automatic weapon positions and areas of small arm firing.

3. Operations: During the reporting period, this battalion participated in the following operations in the Tuy Hoa area.

a. Operation JEFFERSON:

(1) Operation JEFFERSON commenced 1 January 1966 and terminated on 17 January 1966. Battery B, 5th Howitzer Battalion, 47th Artillery, was in the Tuy Hoa area prior to the operation. Headquarters Battery and Battery C motor marched from Phan Rang (Base Camp) to Cam Ranh Bay and completed the move to Tuy Hoa by C-130 aircraft on 5 January 1966. No significant problems were encountered during this move.

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(2) The organization for combat during this operation was as follows: Headquarters Battery, Battery B, and Battery C,. Battery B, 1st Battalion 30th Artillery was under operational control of the 5th Howitzer Battalion, 27th Artillery.

(3) This battalion headquarters formed the nucleus of a Combat Support Coordination Center (CSCC) During Operation JEFFERSON. The mission of the CSCC was to coordinate the fire power of all artillery (US, ROK, ARVN), naval gun fire, air strikes and Army Aviation with Free World Forces maneuver elements (1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division, 2nd Republic of Korea Marine Brigade, and 47th Infantry Regiment, Army Republic of Vietnam). This battalion administratively supported the CSCC personnel with messing facilities, living quarters, vehicles and drivers and all types of equipment and supplies. In addition the battalion was responsible for the fire support coordination element that coordinated all the artillery of the Free World Forces.

(4) Direct and assault fire, utilizing naval gunfire was employed to destroy caves. This special technique proved to be very effective. In addition Battery C, 5th Howitzer Battalion, 27th Artillery, fired a demonstration of a 105mm howitzer trajectory for the benefit of all aviators.

b. Operation VAN BUREN:

(1) The operation commenced on 17 January 1966 and terminated 21 February 1966. During this period, the battalion provided fire support to the 2nd Republic of Korea Marine Brigade, the 47th Republic of Vietnam Army Regiment and the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division. The organization for combat was the same as in Operation JEFFERSON. The battalion observed a cease fire from 1200 hours, 20 January 1966 to 1800 hours, 23 January 1966, during the Republic of Vietnam TET celebration.

(2) Again this battalion had a dual mission during this operation: One, to provide the command and control for the organic and attached batteries, and secondly to function as a Fire Support Coordination Element. In order to accomplish this mission, the battalion fire direction activities were eliminated and all fire direction capabilities were assumed by the batteries.

(3) During this entire operation, the battalion did not function autonomously. All batteries were given separate missions i.e., reinforcing Republic of Vietnam and Republic of Korea Artillery and Battery B, 1st Battalion, 30th Artillery was in general support 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division. Consequently, the battalion fire direction capabilities were diverted to support the Fire Support Coordination Element.

(4) In addition to rendering fire support, this battalion provided vehicles to Tuy Hoa and Hieu Xuong District to assist the local populace in transporting the harvested rice.

c. Operation HARRISON:

(1) Operation HARRISON commenced 21 February 1966 and terminated on 24 March 1966. The organization for combat of the battalion was as follows:

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Headquarters Battery, Battery B and Battery C. During most of the operation Battery B had the mission of direct support to the 1st Battalion, 327th Infantry and for short periods was in direct support of A Troop, 2d Squadron, 17th Cavalry.

(2) The most significant activities during this reporting period were:

(a) On 27 February 1966 Battery B, 5th Howitzer Battalion, 27th Artillery, fired two missions on Viet Cong in the open resulting in 15 killed in action (body count).

(b) On 4 March 1966, Battery B, 5th Howitzer Battalion, 27th Artillery, fired on a reinforced Viet Cong Company resulting in 55 killed in action (body count) and 35 killed in action (estimate).

(c) On 6 March 1966 at 0018 hours, enemy mortar rounds landed in Battery B, 5th Howitzer Battalion, 27th Artillery, position resulting in 1 killed in action and 12 wounded in action.

(d) On 13 March 1966, Battery B, 5th Howitzer Battalion, 27th Artillery, moved by C-123 aircraft from South Field Tuy Hoa to Cung Son in support of 1st Battalion, 327th Infantry. Although short delays were experienced because of mechanical failures, the airlift was accomplished without incident.

(e) On 13 March 1966, Battery C, 5th Howitzer Battalion, 27th Artillery sustained 2 wounded in action from a Viet Cong ambush of a resupply convoy.

d. Operation FTIIMORE:

(1) Operation FTIIMORE commenced 25 March 1966 and is presently still being conducted. This battalion (-) provided fire support for the 47th Army Republic of Vietnam Regiment, 2nd Republic of Korea Marine Brigade and 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division. Organization for combat is as follows: Headquarters Battery, Battery B, and Battery C. Battery B, 1st Battalion, 30th Artillery, went under operational control of 2d Battalion, 320th Artillery on 2 April 1966. On 3 April 1966, liaison was established with 2d Marine Brigade Tactical Operation Center and Battery C, 5th Howitzer Battalion, 27th Artillery, was assigned the mission of general support reinforcing Republic of Korea Artillery until 8 April 1966.

(2) From 8 April 1966 to 12 April 1966 the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division (-) moved from Tuy Hoa area to Phan Riel. Task Force 2d Battalion 327th Infantry was constituted and the 5th Howitzer Battalion, 27th Artillery, (-) was attached. Battery C, 5th Howitzer Battalion, 27th Artillery, received mission of direct support to Task Force 2d Battalion, 327th Infantry, which operated in an area north of Tuy Hoa. Battery B, 5th Howitzer Battalion, 27th Artillery remained in general support reinforcing of Republic of Vietnam Artillery, 47th Infantry Regiment.

(3) On 23 April 1966, Battery B and C, 5th Howitzer Battalion, 27th Artillery, displaced to cover extraction of an Engineer Flotilla 1 Company C, 39th Engineers from Cung Son Airfield.

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The mission of Battery B was direct support Task Force, 2d Battalion, 327th Infantry. The mission of Battery C was general support reinforcing the Republic of Vietnam Artillery.

e. During the entire reporting period, Battery A, 5th Howitzer Battalion, 27th Artillery, remained in Phan Rang with the mission of defense of the base area. Occasionally, artillery platoons from Battery A are used to support Army Republic of Vietnam and Special Forces Operations near the Phan Rang complex. The duration of these exercises range from 1 to 2 days. Normal harassment and interdiction, will adjust, illumination and defensive concentration missions were fired.

f. From the period 1 January 1966 to 30 April 1966 this battalion has delivered timely and accurate fire support to units of the Republic of Vietnam, Republic of Korea, and 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division. The statistical data is as follows:

- \* (1) Number of rounds fired 105 MM 28,978, 155MM 4,808
- (2) Enemy Losses:
  - (a) Killed in action (body count) 147
  - (b) Killed in action (estimate) 115
- (3) Friendly Losses:
  - (a) Killed in action 1
  - (b) Wounded in action 16

4. Logistics:

a. This organization is experiencing difficulties in obtaining augmentation equipment approved for issue through the submission of United States Army Vietnam Form 47. Specific items are ice making machines and generators. Prediction of requirements for these special items can be determined knowing unit deployment schedules. Recommend that automatic issue of these items be effected.

b. Normal deployment of this organization during the reporting period positioned elements at distances in excess of 100 miles from each other. Allocation of regularly scheduled aircraft to the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division allowed continuous and effective resupply of all elements in this command.

c. Due to the tropical climate there was a large amount of paper or paper tape and envelopes. Even exercising extreme care in the storage and handling of these items did not reduce the waste due to weather conditions.

d. Personnel reporting to this organization from CONUS possess winter clothing (undershirt, wool; drawers, wool; overcoat); '67 uniform). Current procedures require the turn-in, transportation and storage of these items. Recommend these items be withdrawn from all personnel prior to arrival in Vietnam.

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SECTION II  
COMMANDER'S RECOMMENDATIONS

1. All light artillery battalions assigned to Vietnam should have a full complement of nine forward observer sections, and four liaison parties so that they are capable of direct support of any regimental or Brigade formation, US, Army Republic of Viet Nam, or Free World Military Forces.

a. All non-divisional artillery battalions should have organic light observation aircraft. The use of these aircraft, in addition to acquiring and adjusting fire on targets not visible to personnel on the ground, is to provide useful information regarding activity in the battle area, conduct artillery registrations, assist in land navigation, and act as a radio relay. All of which contribute to the increased effectiveness of artillery fire support.

b. Firing batteries must emphasize in their training their capability to fire in any direction.

2. Lessons Learned:

Item: Combat Support Coordination Center

Discussion: During Operation VAN BUREN this battalion assumed the overall responsibility of the entire Combat Support Coordination Center as it was originally established during Operation JEFFERSON. It was soon realized that the battalion lacked the staff and personnel to both control and administratively support a Combat Support Coordination Center, provide a Fire Support Coordination Element to the Center and provide the required command and control to its own batteries.

Observation: The requirement for a Combat Support Coordination Center should be established at a higher headquarters so that the battalion can exercise normal command and control responsibilities to its own organic batteries.

Item: Modified Table of Organization and Equipment:

Discussion: Experience for six months in this theater of operations has exposed serious limitations on our operational capabilities. The most pronounced are the following:

a. Lack of new series (AN/VRC 12) radios. This unit has been required to communicate over extended ranges and difficult terrain. The old series radios (AN/GRC 3-8) have provided only marginal communications capability. In many instances, the frequency ranges of the old series radios were not compatible to the AN/VRC series radios of the supported unit.

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b. Lack of organic light observation aircraft: The observation aircraft would be a supplement to ground observers and would greatly enhance this unit's capability for visual reconnaissance of routes and position areas, target acquisition, surveillance, and adjustment of artillery fire.

c. Lack of sufficient forward observation and liaison parties: Presently this battalion has only 3 forward observer sections and 1 liaison section. An augmentation of 6 forward observer sections and 3 liaison sections would give this battalion an organic capability of supporting a three battalion brigade or regiment.

Observation: This battalion has submitted a modified table of organization and equipment on 17 January 1966 recommending the changes mentioned above. It was forwarded to Commanding General, United States Army Republic of Vietnam, and forwarded with approval from I Field Forces Vietnam on 20 February 1966. In addition, a letter to 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division was submitted on 16 April 1966 requesting authorization of selected personnel and equipment on an interim basis. The augmentation requested would greatly improve this battalion's capability to provide fire support to maneuver elements.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

GERALD A. KAPPALER  
Captain, Artillery  
Adjutant

DISTRIBUTION:

2-Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the Army,  
Washington, D.C. 20310

1-Commander in Chief, United States Army Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-MH  
APO US Forces 96558

3-Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVC-Hist, APO US Forces 96307

1-Commanding General, I FFORCEV,  
ATTN: AVP-GC-TNG  
APO US Forces 96240

1-Commanding General, 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div  
APO US Forces 96347

1-File

...F-GC-TMC (15 May 66)

2d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report on Lessons Learned (NCO C-373-28 (R1)) (U)

Headquarters, I Field Force Vietnam, APO US Forces 90140, Q1 USA 660

TO: Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, APO US Forces 96307

1. Concur with comments and recommendations in basic report except as noted in paragraph 2.

Reference para 4a, Sec I: Items of clothing to be turned in prior to departure for RVN are listed in C14, AR 700-6400-1.

2. Nonconcur with comments in paragraphs 3a, b, c and 4a, Sec I and recommendation in para 1a, Sec II, basic report.

a. Reference para 3a, Sec I: Operation Jefferson was initiated 010430 Jan and terminated 161400 Jan 66.

b. Reference para 3b, Sec I: Operation Van Buren was initiated 190600 Jan and terminated 211800 Feb 66.

c. Reference para 3c, Sec I: Operation Harrison was initiated 261000 Jan and terminated 242400 Mar 66.

d. Reference para 4a, Sec I: Ice making machines are not authorized for issue to US combat and combat support units. USARV Reg 30-6 assigns to the 1st Logistical Command responsibility for procuring, or manufacturing and distribution of ice to all US field units in RVN.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

R. C. BALDWIN  
Captain AGC  
Asst AG

AVC-DW (15 May 66)

3d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report on Lessons Learned (NCS OUSPO-28 (R1))

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY, VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96307

THRU: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, AFM: CPOP-MI,  
APO 96558

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the  
Army, Washington, D.C. 20310

1. This headquarters concurs with the 5th Battalion, 27th Artillery's  
Operational Report on Lessons Learned as indorsed.

2. Reference Section II, paragraph 2, basic report: Letter to CT,  
1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division was returned pending submission of  
corrected MTOE (Inclosure 3 to basic report). This headquarters will for-  
ward personnel and equipment requisitions in support of the battalion's  
request for augmentation upon receipt of the corrected MTOE.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

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AMERICAN AIRLINES

CROP-1M (15 May 66)

4th Inf

SUBJCT: Operational Report on Lessons Learned (RCS CSGPO-28 (R1))

IN, US ARMY, PACIFIC, APO San Francisco 96553 9 AUG 1966

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the Army, Washington D.C. 20310

1. The Operational Report on Lessons Learned of the 5th Battalion, 27th Artillery for the period 1 January - 30 April 1966 is forwarded here-with. It is noted that the battalion is part of I FFV Artillery but was attached to the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division, for most of the period covered by the report.

2. In general, this headquarters concurs with the basic report as changed by preceding indorsement. In regard to paragraph 1a, Section II, basic report, it is noted that because of the critical shortage of aircraft and pilots, DA has restricted and limited the provision of aircraft augmentations for non-divisional organizations. Current actions are underway to insure that such aviation requirements are recognized and that they will be filled when assets are available.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:



D. A. HARRISON

Capt, AGC  
Asst AG

1 Incl

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